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ABSTRACT

An examination of the linguistic behavior of monolingual and bilingual Spanish-speaking children in an environment where there is opportunity to develop proficiency in two languages is examined. A review of the literature concerned with the relationship of learning processes to psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic contexts precedes an examination of the influence that language conflict may exert on minority students' academic achievement levels. Several intervention programs designed to equalize the social and language skills of minority children with those of a larger society are discussed. Criticisms and suggestions regarding the effectiveness of such programs are presented. A reference list of 43 sources is appended. (LH)

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One Perspective on Multicultural Education

An Opinion Paper

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One Perspective on Multicultural Education

An Opinion Paper

In this era of changing educational philosophy with all the attendant anxieties and reservations, the very words "cultural pluralism" stir up an immediate emotional reaction. This reaction can be found in a wide range of individuals including teachers, superintendents, principals, parents, professors, and students. For each person the definition of cultural pluralism varies as well as the understanding of the concept and the terms. For example, in a review of the literature, one can find a variety of terms relating to cultural pluralism, i.e., multicultural education, cultural democracy, ethnic studies, bilingual education, etc. This article focuses on bilingual education as it relates to multicultural education and addresses one specific population, the Spanish-speaking, Spanish-surnamed (SS/S) peoples of the Southwest.

After years of debate among researchers there is still no consensus as to what is meant by the concept of bilingualism. It would appear from the literature that bilingualism has no precisely limited meaning since it represents not so much a simple, code-word term to define a condition, but rather a representation of a circumstance. Indeed, definitions range widely across this spectrum of interpretations: psychologists (Ervin-Tripp, 1974; Lambert, Havelka, & Gardner, 1959; MacNamara, 1967) attempted to define bilinguals according to the speaker's psychological processes, to his/her proficiency in both languages, or to the rate of proficiency in the second language. Examining these investigators' definitions more

closely reveals that (1) the psychological processes were categorized as follows: a compound bilingual, that is, an individual who learned two languages in a home where the languages are used interchangeably and a coordinate bilingual, that is, an individual who learned the languages in different situational contexts; (2) bilingual speakers were placed on a continuum of proficiency, thus determining listening and speaking skills in each language; or (3) tests and rating scales were used to assess the degree of bilingualism in the speaker-listener. Sociologists, on the other hand (Gumperz, 1971; Hymes, 1967; Fishman, 1965), defined bilingualism according to the interaction of the language within the social environment. Indeed, Fishman (1965) lists community language usage, attitudes towards languages, community mores, and individual values, as determinants of bilingualism. It would appear, therefore, that in order to be viable, any definition or description of bilingualism needs to incorporate information from psychological, sociological, and linguistic points of view.

However, for the purposes of the present paper, the examination of the linguistic behavior of monolingual and bilingual children in an environment where there is an opportunity to develop receptive and expressive skills in two languages is of particular interest. The reasons for this specificity are to be found in the examination of social-emotional elements in the development of bilingual capabilities, an area infrequently addressed by researchers. For example, psycholinguistic research in the study of language acquisition in children is based on the assumption that a relationship exists between linguistic and cognitive universals (Slobin, 1973). The assumption of the existence of such universals was supported

by Padilla and Liebman (1975) who stated that children all over the world learn language according to a set of underlying principles that appear to be the same. Similar findings by other researchers examining bilingual development of over 40 Headstart students who were acquiring English as a second language. These children were Japanese-American, Chinese-American, and SS/S, and were assessed at various levels of English language acquisition. Hatch (1970) found that all the children acquired English skills in a similar manner, regardless of language preference or background. Thus, while these studies are of interest, they do not examine the possibility that other elements beyond language input variables may influence the bilingual acquisition of potential bilingual children.

The basis for this omission may perhaps be traced to the common notion, held in the past, that the effects of early bilingualism were detrimental. The literature (Carter, 1970; Saunders, 1954; Zintz, 1963) suggested that the young bilingual child did not function well as either an older student or as an adult because of what the literature implied were particular susceptibilities in failures of conflict resolution characterized by symptoms of "alienation" or "anomie." Diebold (1968) pointed to one common theme:

> This is basically a crisis in social and personal identity engendered by antagonistic acculturative pressures directed on a bicultural community by a sociologically dominant monolingual society within which the bicultural community is stigmatized as socially inferior, and to which its bilingualism (historically viewed) is itself an assimilative process. (p. 239)

This would seem to be particularly true for the SS/S children of the southwestern United States, where historical events have led to maintenance of cultural patterns which differ widely from those of the majority culture. The integrity of cultural patterns and the recognition that children acquire the language of the social setting along with the values and beliefs transmitted by the language (Gumperz, 1971; Hymes, 1967; Fishman, 1965) make for a reasonable prediction that cultural conflicts will result whenever a child whose home language is different from the majority culture comes into contact with the majority language and culture on any permanent basis. This conflict usually occurs when the child enters the educational institutions of the society (Carter, 1970; Saville-Troike, 1973). The examination of one such cultural-linguistic group within the United States, the SS/S, illustrates the historical process of attempting to alleviate this conflict.

For many years the educational literature has carried studies which purport to document a number of factors contributing to the overall educational underachievement of SS/S children. In the aggregate, this literature has advanced two main explanations for the academic failure of SS/S children: (1) deficiency, and (2) difference.

1. The deficiency argument as summarized by Hatch (1970) claimed the SS/S child was deficient in language, intelligence, motivation, and emotional development, and that something must be added to make these children achieve. This theory had its origin in a series of studies beginning in the Thirties, which usually asserted that the lower educational achievement of SS/S children was directly related to such factors as home

bilingualism and parents who were poor educational role models. More specifically, it was argued that these parents showed little concern for the academic performance and efficiency of their children (Manuel, 1965; Saunders, 1954; Zintz, 1963). Further, it was assumed that SS/S parents placed little value on education (Saunders, 1954; Zintz, 1963), an explanation used to determine why children were not motivated to achieve in schools. This type of thinking led to a more refined argument, which assumed that the mothers did not know how to teach their children, did not speak to them very often, and that when they did speak, they used only simple, ungrammatical language (Bernstein, 1964; Hess & Shipman, 1968). Clearly, according to these researchers, children from these deprived backgrounds lacked stimulating models and activities that would maximize their potential for language development and intellectual growth.

Indeed, these assumptions led to intervention programs designed to develop motivated, verbally intelligent children who would enter kindergarten in possession of social skills on a par with their more advantaged classmates and prepared to compete on an equal basis (Ramirez & Castaneda, 1974; Kohlberg, 1968). The programs were developed to accomplish these objectives in the preschool years by various methods: playing lots of verbal games with children, singing songs, going on field trips, learning the alphabet, and by instructing mothers in teaching skills (Gordon, 1964; Hess & Shipman, 1968). The more important programs were conducted in English, because it was thought that a child would need to develop verbal skills in the medium of instruction used by the schools. These programs also included a health and nutrition component to remedy other deficiencies; however, the greatest deficiency, as Hatch (1970) pointed out, was

the lack of good paying jobs for the parents since better jobs might have ameliorated some of the crippling environmental conditions.

2. The difference argument, on the other hand, claimed that the SS/S child entered kindergarten with his/her own developed rule-based culture and language. Neither the culture nor the language was considered deficient, merely different from that of the schools. Schools, undoubtedly, reflect a middle-class value system and reward only those behaviors which are reflective of that particular cultural group. Thus, the SS/S children and other minority children were faced with problems of dealing with inconsistencies in values and language (Getzels, 1974). This theory evolved primarily from the work of Labov (1969) on the use of nonstandard English by Black children and by research conducted by sociolinguists such as Hymes (1967), and Fishman (1972a, 1972b) on patterns of language use and values in the community. Within the parameters of this argument, further studies showed that not only had the schools failed to incorporate these differences in their curriculum, but in effect, they had penalized the children for their differences. For example, Anderson and Johnson (1968) found that SS/S children did not differ from their Anglo counterparts in academic achievement motivation, but that their motivation was inhibited by the structure of the classroom. Other studies found that teachers seemed to favor Anglo students over their SS/S peers by exhibiting such classroom behavior as calling on them more frequently and giving them more positive reinforcement (U. S. Civil Rights Commission, 1974).

More recently, Ramirez and Casteneda (1974) have added an important new dimension to the difference argument. Their contention is that SS/S

children are more often field dependent. It would seem self-evident that the recognition of this crucial difference in learning and teaching style causes conflict and that as long as teachers remain insensitive to the different learning styles of their SS/S students, those students will not achieve academically.

Statistics certainly point to the lack of responsiveness on the part of educational institutions in meeting the needs of the SS/S child as well as children from other ethnic groups. For example, the Civil Rights Commission found that almost 40 percent of the SS/S children in the southwest who start school do not finish school. The Commission also recorded the fact that the proportion of SS/S children reading below grade level is generally twice that of the Anglo children (U. S. Civil Rights Commission, 1975). The Chicano Subcommittee of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Student Integration (1976) reported its recent policy statement to read as follows:

> With regard to Chicanos in particular, researchers not only unequivocally point to the negative self-concept and associated poor academic performance that the schools produce, but assert or imply that providing the conditions that enhance a Chicano's self-identity will tend to reduce socially unacceptable behavior. (p. 4)

Surely, there can be no argument in anyone's mind that in the past, the majority culture has developed negative stereotypes of the members of minority groups or cultures. These stereotypes--and many of them are held by teachers--cannot be but transmitted to the student in the classroom, both by the teacher (Brophy & Good, 1969) and by the majority group

classmates (Saville-Troike, 1973), with the inevitable result that the minority student develops a strongly negative self-image.

In the past ten years, a number of programs have focused on altering non-facilitative patterns and enhancing cognitive stimulation in the home. Some of these programs have involved the preschool child while others concern themselves with the children in the early grades (Gordon, 1964; Radin, 1967). All programs stress the fact that parents are capable of helping their children, but have not received adequate instruction to do so. The message conveyed seems to be that low-income parents are competent individuals who lack some skills which can be learned.

In addressing differences in language, a number of studies surveyed language use and its apparent relationship to classroom learning. MacNamara (1967) found that when English-speaking students were instructed in Gaelic, their scores in both mathematical performance and overall school performance deteriorated. Ervin-Tripp (1970) suggested that this research might be used for comparison with SS/S students because instruction in English, as opposed to the home language, might turn out to weaken or interfere with the SS/S child's ability to learn new concepts.

However, an interesting ancillary to these findings is the work done by sociolinguists. In sociolinguistic contexts, where bilingualism does not ascribe a lower status, bilingual children were found to outperform their monolingual peers. In Peal and Lambert's (1962) study of carefully matched monolingual and bilingual groups, bilingualism appeared to be associated with, and may in fact facilitate, significantly superior performances on both verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests. Feldman and

Shen (1971) supported these conclusions with their study on SS/S Headstart children, who were given a series of Piagetian tasks. The findings reported by Feldman and Shen showed bilingual children to outperform monolingual children on all tasks. In a study by Ianaco-Worrall (1972), conducted with Afrikaans/English-speaking preschool children, the bilingual children were found to be superior to monolingual children on cognitive tasks requiring both language comprehension and production.

Thus, it is ironic that in a complex and advanced society such as the United States, Americans speak only English in early childhood and may never develop bilingual competence. Our dominant culture does not generally expect, nor even particularly encourage, its English-speaking members to become bilingual. It does, however, demand bilingualism of its cultural-linguistic minorities (Saville-Troike, 1973). Currently, the wind seems to be changing somewhat: there appears to be a trend in the direction of Leopold's (1939) assertion that bilingualism may actually be intellectually beneficial. Indeed, researchers (Bowen, undated; John & Horner, 1971) have begun to recognize the intellectual and social value in speaking two languages, and have suggested that in the future, it may well be the monolingual, monocultural child who will be deprived.

The future of bilingual education is now in jeopardy; however, with the merging of the philosophy that supported bilingual education and the philosophy that looks at the bicultural reality of the child, a new educational perspective is emerging. The awareness that many children are faced each day with the difficult task of trying to reconcile two cultures into their lives, as well as two languages, has become the underlying basis

for multicultural education. The approach requires that those providing education for children in a multicultural world understand, accept, and value cultural differences. It does not mean separate units or courses of study unless those are deemed necessary; it does not mean transportation of children from one educational site to another, unless that is the only recourse open; it does not mean alternative school structures unless those are needed and desired by the communities; it does mean planned learning experiences which have specific objectives designed to prepare all students and school personnel intellectually, emotionally, and socially, so that they may participate on equal terms in a culturally diverse, democratic society. Multicultural education, then, is the internalized respect, appreciation, and therefore acceptance, of one's own culture and of cultures different from one's own.

Specifically, in order to create a clear framework for culturally pluralistic education, an exploration of definitions of culture and values follow: Anthropologists were the first to conceptualize definitions of culture. Kluckholm and Strodtbeck (1961) analyzed several hundred definitions and found that the main variations were to be found in: (1) what properties of culture were stressed; and (2) how explicit and comprehensive the definition was. A basically acceptable definition according to anthropologists might be:

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of

> traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values. (Kluckholm, 1972, p. 73)

or a more recent definition:

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know and believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. . . . it is the form of things that people have in mind, their mode of perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. (Goodenough, 1957, p. 167)

and finally, a definition by a psychologist:

> Cultures are a complex of guidelines for perceiving, explaining, judging, and doing that exist for any group of people. (Maehr, 1974, p. 35)

Thus, culture can be defined in a variety of ways and in varying contexts, but essentially, culture refers to perception, cognition, preferred ways of behaving, and the ecology of the individual and the group. Included in this would be language, religion, the tools and technology, the arts and crafts, the artifacts, the language, as well as the ethics, morals, and values.

What do we actually mean by values? Educators have spent time in the past using various techniques that are designed to make individuals cognizant of their values--for example, values clarification tasks, or role playing situations that force people to make choices and therefore expose their values. These techniques have a definite place in awareness workshops or inservice training sessions, but again, there are many definitions

of values and some confusion results from differences in interpretations.

One of the ways which seems to be more effective in defining is to give a value laden word such as honesty to a group and then have the group give specific behaviors that would depict what they mean by "honesty." Very quickly it is possible to determine the values associated with the word.

In this paper, values will be defined as ways of behaving, preferred personality types, ways of coping and dealing with the world around the group, and ways that others are expected to behave. All of these could easily be stated as a definition of culture, but culture encompasses more than values.

If it is possible to examine culture and values as rules which govern and guide behavior, then the responses to different cultures from our own can be free from contempt and fear. This is an extremely important concept when discussing cultural pluralistic education. The concept of culture includes the universality of cultures, the organization of cultures along universal patterns common to all human lifeways, and the recognition of the human effort, creativity, and thought that form each culture. Thus, each culture represents a collective system created and being re-created by the humans who live within the group.

Recognizing that culture is not any more important than other concepts of group life such as society, community, power, or inequality, it is still possible to include the concept as one of the most important components of cultural pluralism.

As educators in the Southwest, the terms cultural pluralism and

cultural democracy are becoming more relevant every day. More than one-third of all children attending public schools are members of ethnic/racial groups and that proportion increases each year. One out of five of those students attend schools which are predominantly of minority composition, while 42 percent of all the majority students attend schools with less than ten percent minority (U. S. Civil Rights Commission, 1974). With these kinds of statistics, it is almost certain that there will be exposure to different cultures across all educational milieu, and that pressures will be applied from communities, students, parents, administrators, etc., to develop better teaching environments to meet the needs of these cultures. Historically, this is not a new state of affairs for children of different ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Multicultural education does not really exist in the schools of today--some attempts to provide multicultural experiences exist--but the basic concept of multicultural education has had little acceptance and virtually no application. Education has taken several avenues in attempting to achieve multicultural education--one of the most obvious is the ethnic studies path which provides cultural and historical backgrounds for exploration by the students; another means of providing multicultural exposure is the use of a multicultural coordinator who with a cart-full of materials is invited to classrooms to present cultural modules; another is the celebration within the school of various ethnic holidays and special days of ethnic significance. Bilingual programs usually emphasize the "bilingualism" over "biculturalism." None of these approaches achieve multicultural education as visualized by the author, who feels that

multicultural education should prepare the student to function effectively in two or more worlds without conflict or a loss of orientation. Multicultural education embraces cultural pluralism, bilingual and cross-cultural education, ethnic studies, desegregation and integration of students and staff, community involvement, and intergroup and human relations education.

Cultural pluralism is a fact and a concept. There are within the boundaries of the United States many diverse cultures, and the recognition of this constitutes a fact. As a concept, cultural pluralism refers to the coexistence of these cultures as opposed to the "melting-pot" theory which hoped to melt all cultures into one. As an individual attribute, it means the acceptance of and respect for one's own culture as well as other cultures. Bilingual and cross-cultural education include the use of two languages, one of which is English, for mediums of instruction which includes the study of the history and cultures associated with the home language, as well as the comparison of two or more cultures to determine similarities and differences as a means of achieving cultural understanding.

Ethnic studies provide "information, materials and strategies for teaching about ethnic groups . . . a vital ethnic studies program should enable students to derive valid generalizations about the characteristics of all of America's ethnic groups, and to learn how they are alike and different, in both their past and present experiences" (Banks, 1973). Desegregation and integration are issues that would require a large amount of space to sufficiently define; however, very briefly what is meant is

the removal of handicaps such as separation and isolation for children from both the majority and minority groups. Community involvement is another area which would require another paper to do justice to the importance of such involvement in multicultural education, but the feeling we have is that in order to produce the final product--a multicultural person--the community must be able to participate in the defining of those preferred personality patterns that are acceptable to the community, as well as expanding those personality characteristics that they feel are important in a multicultural world. Intergroup and human relations education are those based on "learning to live together" by reconciling such differences and divisions in communities as those based not only on race, ethnic background and religion, but also on age, socio-economic status, status of neighborhood, rural-urban and new-old (Taba, 1952). These objectives are grouped in patterns of growth and involve four concepts: (1) There are certain facts, ideas and concepts basic to intelligent understanding and literacy in group relations; people need to know these facts about human beings and groups, and their functioning in society. (2) Living in a multigroup world requires feelings, values, and attitudes that add up to a comprehensive and cosmopolitan cultural sensitivity. (3) Human relations require ability to think objectively and rationally about people, about the problems of their relationships, and about cultures. (4) It is necessary to develop certain skills in order to get along with individuals and to work successfully in groups (Taba, 1952).

Using the previously mentioned definitions and techniques for achieving multicultural education as a basis for presentations in inservice

training sessions with teachers, the author has been involved in districts located in five states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico. Teachers are in a double-bind in attempting to respond to the demands for multicultural education--first, they are asked to do something and then given only minimal assistance in terms of materials, techniques, strategies, etc.; second, even though they are superficially encouraged to institute innovative procedures, they must walk a narrow line between what is satisfactory and what would be considered too revolutionary. In working with teachers, this researcher found that most often what they desire is what they can do today, tomorrow, and then the day after in order to achieve multicultural education. There is no instant prescription that can be given to these teachers, but encouragement and understanding of what they face allow them to begin to explore their own potential as well as the potentials of the community.

Changes must begin to occur in training institutions for teacher preparation. These changes should encompass the types of courses offered to student teachers, as well as the placement of the students teachers, which reflect the desired type of environment conducive to multicultural education. Teachers do not have the information that they need about ethnic cultures, and because of this lack of knowledge, many prejudices and biases remain. Teachers are not prepared in either the cognitive or affective domain in order to function effectively in ethnic education and are not given the opportunity to become sensitive and aware of the cultural diversity they will find in their classrooms. Reorganization of training institutions that will include and integrate multicultural education

within the total programs being offered by colleges and universities is crucial.

The major issue at stake in the preparation of multicultural educational materials seems to be one of building on skills necessary for full participation in a multicultural world in a developmental model. Many courses offered in schools, i.e., reading, mathematics, sciences, etc., are taught in a developmental progression, where each skill presented is built into the curriculum on a age or grade level basis and new concepts or skills build on the old. Building a multicultural person will require a great amount of this building of new on old, so that the final product is one that is satisfactory to all--the person, the community, the families, the educators, and the world community.

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